

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 NEAE-00 PER-03 CCO-00 SSO-00

VOE-00 SCA-01 MMO-04 /031 W
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O 211506Z JUL 76

FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8761

INFO AMEMBASSY BEIRUT IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY ATHENS IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY NICOSIA IMMEDIATE

UNCLAS DAMASCUS 4792

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: APER, CGEN

SUBJECT: FSLs FOR DAMASCUS VISA SECTION

REF: BEIRUT 6455

1. EMBASSY DAMASCUS NOTES WITH INTEREST NICOISA'S REQUEST FOR SERVICES OF BEIRUT FSLs AND WOULD LIKE TO REQUEST TDY SERVICES OF TWO BEIRUT FSLs TO COPE WITH INCREASED VISA WORKLAND HERE.

2. SINCE CLOSING OF CONSULAR SECTION BEIRUT ON JULY 19, VISA WORKLOAD IN DAMASCUS HAS SHARPLY INCREASED OVER PREVIOUS RISING TREND ATTRIBUTABLE TO LEBANESE CONDITIONS. DURING FIRST SIX MONTHS OF CY 76 OF 1260 NIVs ISSUED 216 WERE TO LEBANESE AS OPPOSED TO 12 OUT OF 612 NIVs ISSUED DURING SAME PERIOD CY 75. DURING FIRST HALF OF JULY APPROXIMATELY 50 PERCENT OF NIV CASES WERE LEBANESE. ON JULY 20, 33 OF 47 NIV CASES ACTED ON WERE LEBANESE AND ON JULY 21 OF 60 NIV CASES ACCEPTED BEFORE WE WERE FORCED TO CLOSE OUR DOORS AN HOUR EARLY 35 LEBANESE.

3. IV FIGURES SHOW SIMILAR INCREASE: 18 OF 172 INVS DURING LAST SIX MONTHS OF CY75 WERE TO LEBANESE WHILE THEY ACCOUNTED FOR 43 OF 229 OF IVs ISSUED DURING FIRST SIX MONTHS OF CY76. IN FIRST HALF OF JULY ALONE LEBANESE

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MONTHS OF CY76. IN FIRST HALF OF JULY ALONE LEBANESE

ACCOUNTED FOR 21 OF 29 PETITIONS FILED HERE AND 21 OUT OF 31 APPLICATIONS TAKEN FOR IV'S. AN AVERAGE OF 10 INQUIRIES PER DAY ARE RECEIVED REGARDING IV CASES PRESENTLY ON FILE IN BEIRUT.

4. AVERAGE LEBANESE APPLICANT COMES FROM TYRE, SAIDO, TRIPOLI, AND BEKAA. WE ALSO GET SIGNIFICANT NUMBER OF CHRISTIANS FROM AREA AROUND JOUNIEH AND SUPRISING NUMBER FROM WEST BEIRUT. HOTEL SPACE IN DAMASCUS IS TIGHT, BUT AVERAGE APPLICANT EITHER MAES ONE-DAY TRIP OR MANAGES TO FIND OVERNIGHT ACCOMMODATION. AN APPLICANT WHO CAN DRIVE TO DAMASCUS CANNOT BE TOLD TO PURSUE HIS APPLICATION IN CYPRUS OR ATHENS.

5. IN VIEW OF INCREASED AND INCREASING WORKLOAD, DEMONSTRATED BY 55 OF OVERTIME PUT IN SO FAR THIS MONTH BE 3 REGULAR LOCAL EMPLOYEES OF CONSULAR SECTION DAMASCUS, ONLY TWO OF WHOM WORK ON VISAS, WE WOULD APPRECIATE DEPARTMENT'S PROMPT APPROVAL OF TDY ASSIGNMENT OF BEIRUT FSLs DAAD HANNAOUI AND NABIL NAJEM.

6. WHILE WORKLOAD OF SINGLE AMERICAN CONSULAR OFFICER HAS BEEN TEMPORARILY SOLVED BY TDY ASSIGNMENT OF BEIRUT OFFICER KARLA SMITH, DEPARTMENT MAY WISH TO BEGIN CONSIDERING FUTURE TDY ASSIGNMENTS OF CONSULAR OFFICERS TO HELP TIDE DAMASCUS OVER UNTIL BEIRUT REOPENS OR VISA DEMAND DECREASES TO MANAGEABLE LEVELS.
MURPHY

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